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DEAR+COMICS 262

1

夏目イサク
Isaku NATSUME

鉛色パラドックス

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A change in the stakeout team throws Onoe, reporter for a weekly magazine, together with his contemporary, Kaburagi, a photographer. Onoe secretly considers Kaburagi his rival, and Kaburagi's haphazard way of doing things goes against Onoe's strong sense of ethics--there's nothing but conflict between them. But, in joint pursuit of a scandal, the two of them begin to care about each other...? Introducing the main fighting couple!

nakama presents

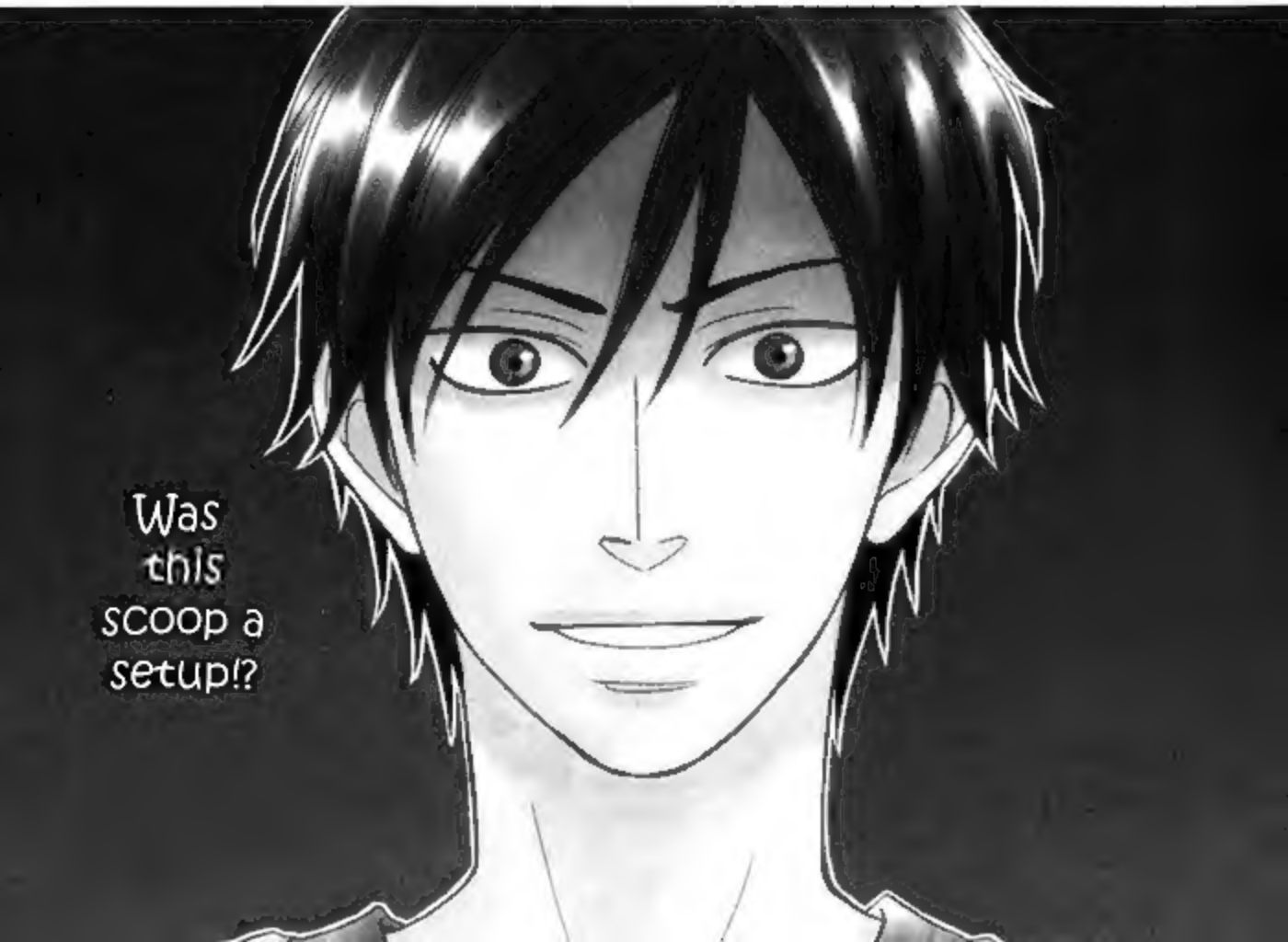
Amber Paradox

by Natsume Isaku

Credits

scanner: redwhing
translator: firecrest
proofer: aripie
editor: aripie
qcer: pgrape

...embracing that guy!...
The person I'd thought of as my girlfriend until that second...
AMBER PARADOX


Was this scoop a setup!?

Logic.
01
前篇

AMBER PARADOX

FIRST PART

chatter
chatter
UH...
THE 'STAKEOUT' TEAM... ?
WHY?
THE NUMBER OF STAFF HERE HAS BEEN REDUCED. IT'S REALLY HARD.
TANAKA WAS SUDDENLY ADMITTED TO THE HOSPITAL, SO YOU ARE GOING FROM POLITICS TO THE STAKEOUT TEAM.
I don't want to!
I even bought a brand-new suit!
I THOUGHT
THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF DECIDED LAST WEEK I WOULD BE MOVED OVER TO POLITICS...

But that team—
KIUCHI!
HEE—EY, KABU!
WE CAN REALLY MAKE USE OF YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF "SCANDALS".
IT WAS ALREADY DECIDED AT THE MEETING, ONOE.
I won't be too much help there...
Hehehe!
pat
AND I'M NOT REALLY FIT.
...I DON'T KNOW ENTERTAINMENT NEWS ALL THAT WELL, THOUGH.
I don't want to!

Kaburagi Motoharu.

Since that time...

I haven't been able to stomach his presence.

Three years ago,

Kaburagi and I started working for Shinkan and were assigned to the weekly magazine, "DASH."

I, who aspired to be a journalist, was overjoyed at joining the "scandals" team.

I worked hard, and my efforts bore fruit.

However.

← This, from last week.

Kaburagi, who always blocks my path right at the crucial moment,

is someone I consider a rival.

I have to work with this kind of guy.

Plus, I rank below him.

Editor-in-chief, did I do something wrong?

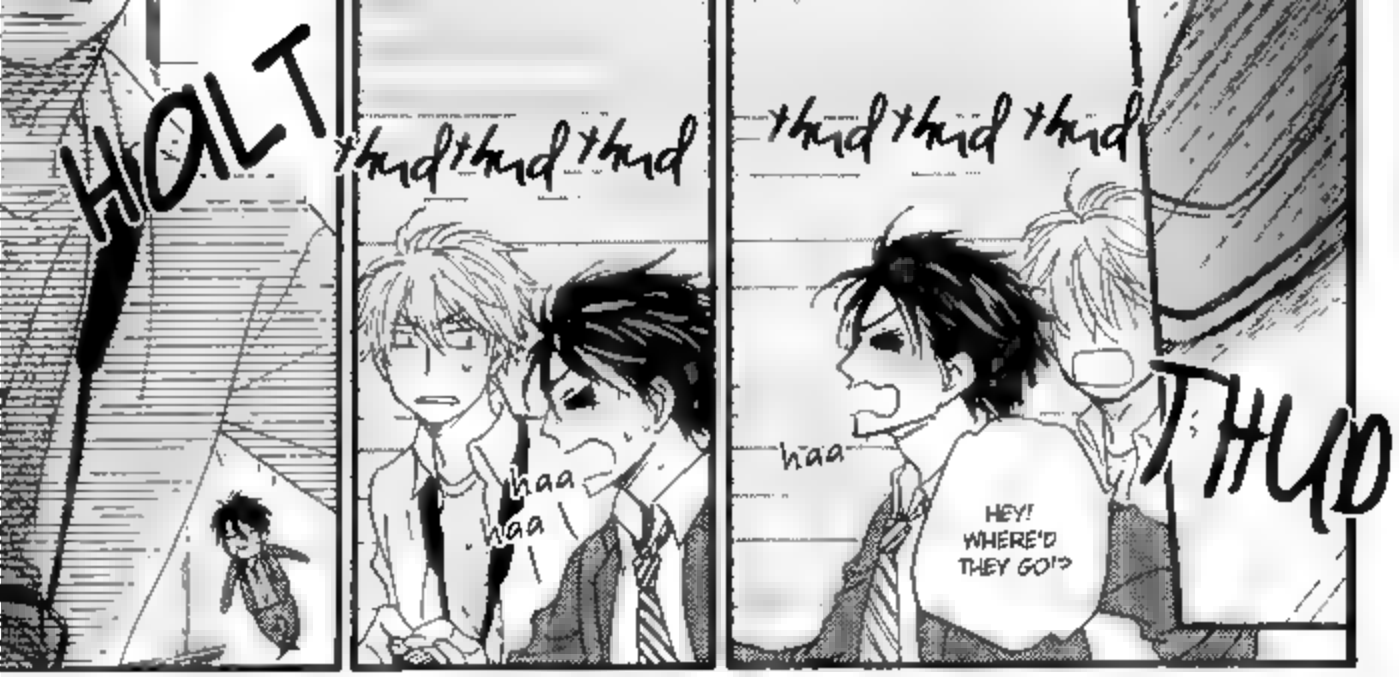
If there's something you wanna say, you can say it.

WHAT?

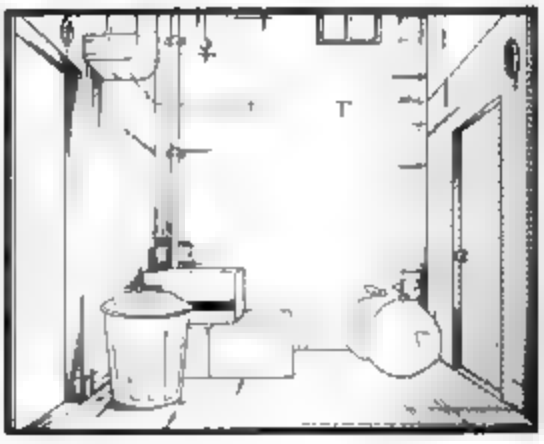
ARE YOU A COMPLETE AND UTTER BEGINNER IN STAKEOUTS?
YEAH, BUT...
ALL RIGHT LEMME TELL YOU THIS
UH, NO NOTHING
YOU.
WHOOPS I DIDN'T REALIZE I WAS STARING AT HIM.
DON'T SAY THERE'S 'NOTHING' TO BE TAUGHT!
OKAY, SO... WHY ARE WE DOING WHAT WE'RE RIGHT NOW?
GENERALLY SPEAKING? WE'RE WAITING FOR OUR TARGET TO APPEAR
C'mon, teach me right!
Huh!?
IN OUR JOB, THERE'S REALLY NOTHING TO BE TAUGHT
SO IF YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND SOMETHING, JUST ASK.
Oh.
Is that so?
WE GOT A TIP THAT THEY'VE GONE TO A STORE AROUND HERE
SO WE JUST HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE IF THEY'LL REALLY APPEAR.
THAT'S IT?
YEP
TODAY WE'RE GOING TO GET PROOF THAT THE ACTRESS ASAOKA YUMI IS HAVING AN AFFAIR.

OKAY, THEN— WHAT'D YOU DO BEFORE BEING ASSIGNED HERE?
HUH?
WHAT?
Easy?
THIS IS PRETTY EASY, HUH?
SOMEHOW I THOUGHT THE STAKEOUT TEAM WOULD BE MORE DEMANDING, BUT,
I'm not going to lose!
OH?
THAT SO? MAN, I DUNNO THAT NEVER SEEN YOU.
I've done relatively big features!
I...
I WROTE ARTICLES! ON POLITICS!
HAVEN'T YOU EVER BEEN MY NAME ON A MAGAZINE PAGE!?
And, uh
AND LAST MONTH, I HAD AN ARTICLE ABOUT THE PROBLEM OF POLITICIAN HIRAGANE.
I RECENTLY COVERED THE BUILDING FIRE FOR AN OPENING ARTICLE
NOW SHUT UP
HMM. AREN'T YOU CAPABLE
Whaaat!?
But you didn't even know about my existence?
I even asked Kuchi about ones with no credits
Even though I check out all your photographs
this one!

STOP MOVING AROUND POINT-LESSLY I'M OUT OF FOCUS.
OOPS.
WE STILL CAN'T SEE THEIR FACES.
IS THAT ASAOKA YUMI?
WHOA, GOOD EYE
THOSE TWO ARE ACTING WEIRD
AH, KNEW IT IT'S ASAOKA.
What, for real!?
THEY'LL SEE US!
DON'T BE SO CONSPIC-UOUS!
WHAT?
ME? RUN AFTER THEM?
YOU SEE ANYONE ELSE HERE!? I HAVE TO MOVE THE CAR!
ENOUGH BLABBING! RUN!
GET AFTER 'EM!
Huh?
SPOTTED!
Damn!
Whoa, actresses are speedsters!
How'd she get there so fast!?
slam
Whaaaat!?


HALT
thud thud thud
haa
haa
thud thud thud
haa
HEY! WHERE'D THEY GO!?
THUD

...!
Legs've cramped
I WANNA ASK JUST IN CASE, BUT YOU WERE ALREADY RUNNING ALL-OUT, WEREN'T YOU?



I'M NOT SAYING TO GET THE COVER STORY, BUT
MR. CAPABLE REPORTER.
.MAYBE IF YOU MADE YOURSELF A LITTLE MORE USEFUL, HUH?
Ugh!
AND OF COURSE, YOU DIDN'T SEE THE GUY'S FACE
H-HIS BODY TYPE.
H. HE'S AROUND MY HEIGHT
Probably~
sigh...

SO OF COURSE MY LEGS CRAMPED! AND WHAT? IS THAT MY FAULT?
I NEVER EXPECTED THAT I WAS GOING TO BE IN A KIND OF JOB WHERE I HAD TO RUN FULL TILT WITHOUT EVEN ANY KIND OF PREP ON HOW WE WERE GONNA COORDINATE!
Until now I've been riding a desk day in and day out!

*Note. his name is masa-something, but instead of -chan ovoe says yan - whether because he's drunk or that's really just masa's nickname.

If it's all about news then I'm plenty useful! IDIOT!
My slow legs are my only weakness!
GOD DAMN IT!
complex of his junior high school

I mean if that's the case then you should say it right from the start, right? But that fucker didn't even tell me a damn thing, and then bam! Do this! And when you fail that then you get all the blame? Like if he was gonna tease me a little, fine, 'cause he's my senior, but is it just by chance that I was reassigned?
WOW WHEN YOU GET DRUNK YOU JUST BLAB EVERYTHING, HUH?
Have some water

*Basically good at everything

Got it!
A beer, please.
...!
What is with this guy?
Why is he so annoying?
Shit
SO YOU COULDN'T DO YOUR JOB,
SO NOW YER GETTING DRUNK AND RUNNING OFF AT THE MOUTH?
YOU'RE SURE EASY TO UNDER-STAND, ONOE.
SINCE IT'S FINALLY STARTING TO CLICK THIS GUY IS YOUR RIVAL, RIGHT?
HUH?
SO LET ME GET THIS RIGHT
you haven't really been paying attention here you?
Yes.
ONOE ONOE.
Isn't it all right to grumble? I'm human, after all
MAYBE YOU'RE REALLY UNLUCKY OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT
NOTHING
WHAT ABOUT IT?
rattle
SO LAST WEEK
THE DUDE WHO GOT YOUR GIRL

YOU'RE EARLY TODAY
clatter
WE FINISHED QUICKLY!
Welcome!
HUH?
Oh! Sorry for keeping you waiting, Kabu chan! ♡
Gosh, I'm sooo hungry!
HU—Hu?
Ohahaha
Really?
WELL, I WAS THINKING I REALLY WANTED TO SEE THE TWO OF YOU!
SO I LEFT IN THE MIDDLE OF WORK AND CAME HERE!
It's fine!
Are you sure it's all right?
Huh?
Whoa
Oh, thank you!

HEY, MASAYAN
WHAT.
WHO'S THAT HOST?
YOUR RIVAL, ISN'T HE?
Who the fuck are you?

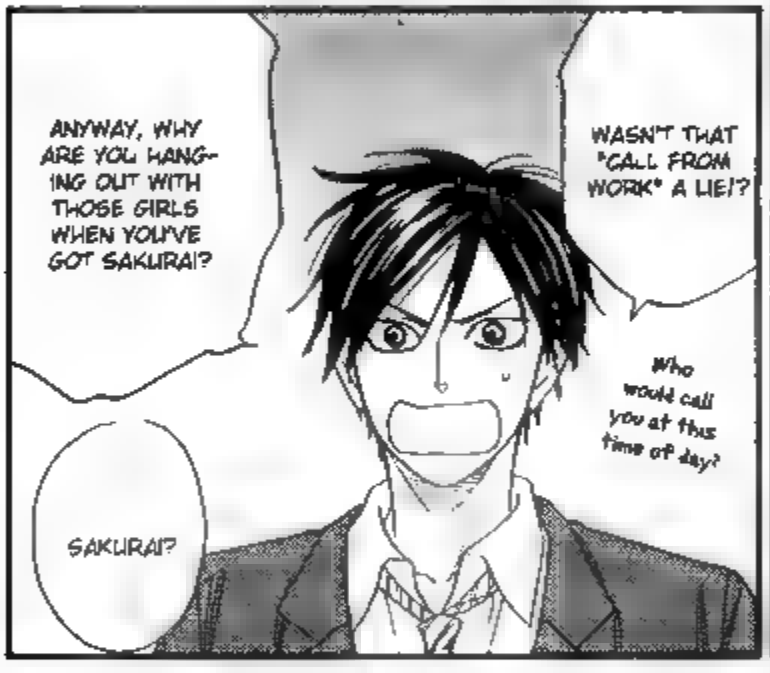
IS THAT SO? ME, I ALWAYS SEE HIM LIKE THAT
The hell is that smile?
YOU'RE LYING!
THAT'S THE FIRST TIME I'VE SEEN THAT LOOK ON HIS FACE!
Mewn
OHH, IS THAT SO SO IT WAS THAT BOSS AGAIN TODAY TEASING YOU?
YES! JEEZ, THAT GUY! HONESTLY, HE COMES OFF AS DESPERATE!

ahahaha!
THAT GUY IS A REALLY GOOD LISTENER
IN ANY CASE HE SEEMS LIKE A LADY-KILLER.
HE'S USUALLY GOT A GIRL WHEN HE COMES HERE
But it's always a different one.
...!?

BUT THOSE TWO NEVER SAID WHERE THEY WERE GOING, RIGHT?
So weird!
Right?
Oh, BUT!
THE MOST RECENT CALL WAS FROM A GIRL SO IT'S PROBABLY NOT TOO FAR FROM THOSE SEEDY SHOPS
WAAH! THAT'S TRUE!

What already?
OH, SORRY
THAT'S A CALL FROM WORK
GOTTA GO!
No! It's too early!
Ozzz
She's...
So...
open
slam
MASA-YAN.
HM? WHAT'S THE MATTER, ONCE?
THANKS FOR COMIN'!
'SCUSE ME, BILL PLEASE!
No, we invited you!
Nah, it's my bad.
Yes sir!
SURE
GET IN TOUCH AGAIN, OKAY?
Just what the hell are you?
What was that?
Not again!
AHH...
HEY!
DASH
MY BILL...
JUST PUT IT ON MY TAB!

naa
naa
naa
Hey!


ANYWAY, WHY ARE YOU HANGING OUT WITH THOSE GIRLS WHEN YOU'VE GOT SAKURAI?
WASN'T THAT "CALL FROM WORK" A LIE!?
Who would call you at this time of day?
SAKURAI?

I have somewhere to be.
WHAT?
IT'S NOT "WHAT"!

YOU TWO-TIMER!
YOU. WHY DO YOU HAVE OTHER WOMEN WHILE YOU HAVE HER.
'WHILE I HAVE' ?
BUT I'M NOT GOING OUT WITH SAKURAI

She was dating you, huh?
THAT AHH.
THE EDITOR OF KAGIY?
TH... THAT'S RIGHT!

HUH?
AND SINCE YOU MENTIONED IT
THOSE TWO GIRLS WORK AT YANAGI CONSTRUCTION, SO,
RECENTLY I'VE BEEN TALKING THEM UP
SO YOU WERE... GATHERING INFORMATION!?
YEAH! RIGHT ON
YANAGI.
CONSTRUCTION.
THE COMPANY THAT'S MAKING A FUSS OVER THE SAGI CHARGES...?
NAH.
WHEN WE FIRST MET.
UH
ARE'NT YOU JUST TRICKING THE TWO OF THEM!?
UNDER-COVER RECONNAIS-SANCE.
I GUESS?

'IF THERE'S SOMETHING ON YOUR MIND
I'D BE HAPPY TO LISTEN.'
IS WHAT I SAID
NEXT THING, YOU KNOW

WHAT?
OH, ARE YOUR EARS SENSITIVE?
AND RAN THEIR MOUTHS OFF AT ME ON THEIR OWN.
BLUSH
...AND THEY JUST WENT AHEAD
FOR THAT REASON, I GOTTA GO AND LOOK FOR THAT 'SEEDY SHOP' WHERE THE YANAG BOSS REPUTEDLY GOES.
OH, WELL
whatever
release
...HORRIBLE!
THOSE WHO ARE DRUNK, GO HOME
BYE
This guy's...

HUH?
Meeting In Progress
SHIKAN
I'VE FOUND YANAGI CONSTRUCTION'S HIDEY-HOLE
. . .
AND IT'S THAT MANSION.
APPARENTLY THEY KNEW ABOUT THE DEFECTION FROM THE BEGINNING.
AHA! WHO'D YOU GET IT FROM?
I GOT IT FROM THE EMPLOYEES OF THE CLUB THAT THE YANAGI BOSS HAS BEEN GOING TO
EVEN BEFORE THE EXPOSE HE APPARENTLY GOT DRUNK AND BLABBED ABOUT IT
Here's a picture of the store.
...!!

Oh, but say he was hard to handle as a frequent customer in the article.
Gotcha.
In just a few hours yesterday night..
How many, and to what lengths did he go...even if he knew the shop, how did he come by that evidence...?
Oh, YEAH
ALSO, ABOUT ASAOKA YUMI. I KNOW THE STORE THAT SHE FREQUENTS.
I'LL BE GOING TO STAKE IT OUT.
This too!?
What kind of information network does he have?
ALL RIGHT, WE CAN PUT THE YANAGI ACCOUNT ON HOLD TEMPORARILY, WITH THIS
I DON'T SUPPOSE YOU'D HAVE A COPY OF THE DOCUMENTS ON HAND?
That's impossible, isn't it?
True. But keep your eyes posted.
OH?
DIDN'T THE TWO OF YOU GET THIS MATERIAL?
UH, NO, THAT'S.
I...
HUH?
WELL DONE, YOU TWO!
BUT REALLY!

OH, WELL ONOE, YOU BETTER GET THE HANG OF THINGS FAST
SO YOU CAN HELP KABU OUT
That's
Sigh
OH, IS THAT IT
I WENT BY MYSELF AFTER WORK.
It's Kabu's achievement huh?
Was I just.. let down?
Onoe's line of sight
Don't say it like I'm inferior to this bastard!
YOU.
This is bad.
Shit I was doing it again.
ARE YOU WATCHING ME?
WHAT ARE YOU HERE FOR?
RIGHT NOW

If I don't get over this soon...I'm going to stay on shaky ground.
AH!

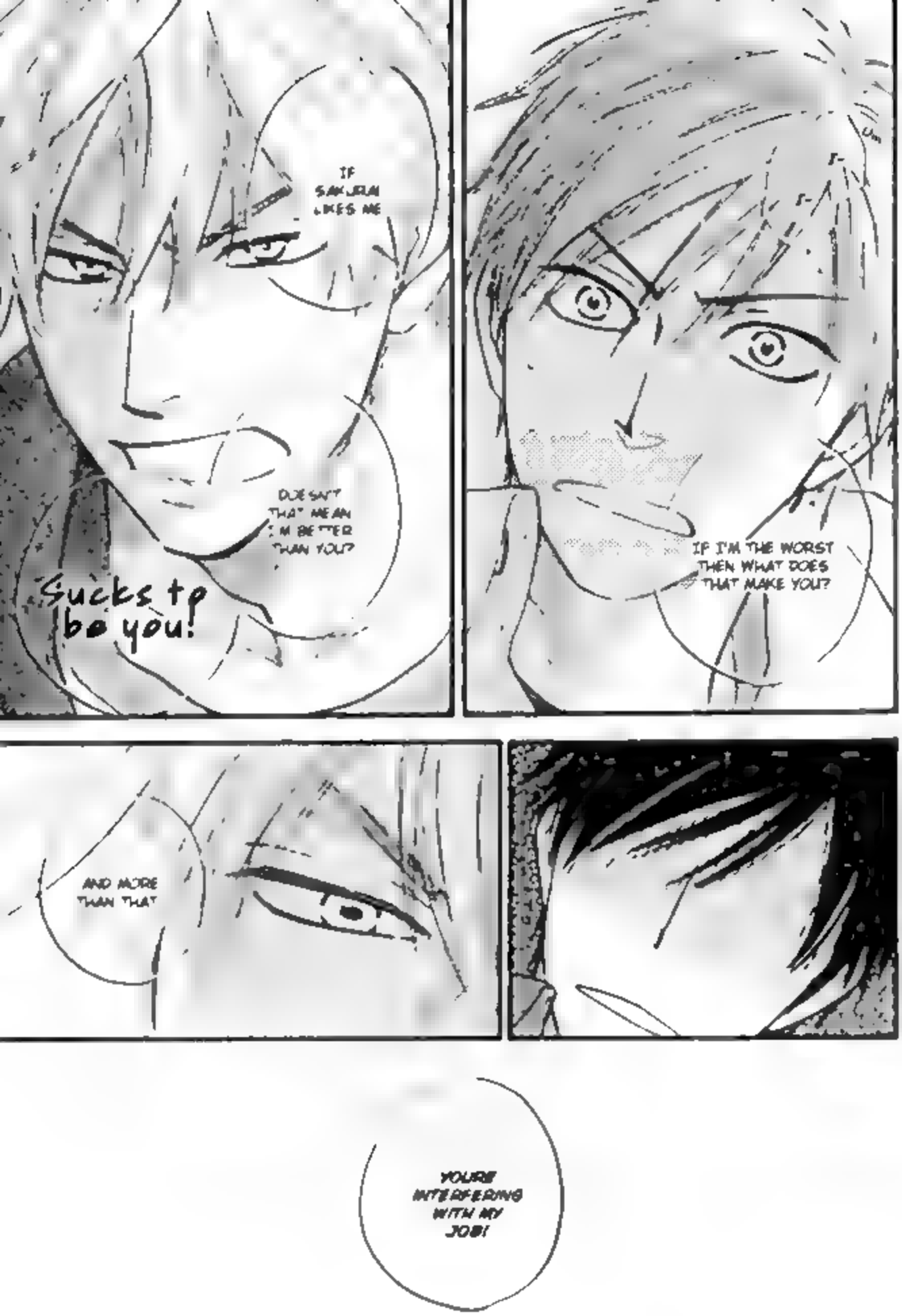
I'M POSITIVE THIS IS THE PLACE
Just making sure.
SO.
IT'S DEFINITELY THAT STORE?
But we don't have anything to watch.
Questioning me?

EXACTLY HOW DID YOU GET AHOLD OF THIS INFORMATION?
WHAT?
UM...
I'M NOT ASKING ABOUT YOUR SOURCE OF INFO!
Well of course you wouldn't say anything about that!
I JUST WANT TO KNOW IF ITS THROUGH CONTACTS... BRIBES...
Things like that!

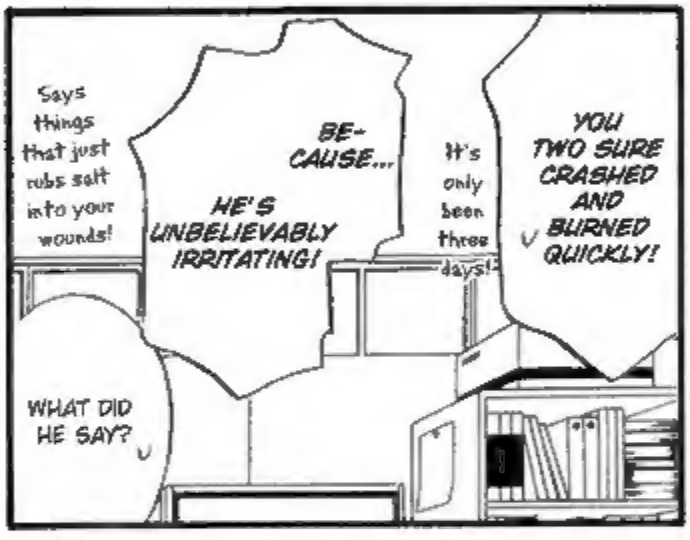
IT'S BOTH BRIBES AND CONNECTIONS
HMM.
BUT WITH THE YANAGI CASE, YOU WERE ALSO ABLE TO GET INFORMATION FROM THE STORE
How much did he pick up?
WELL SOMETIMES I ALSO USE MY BODY
WHAA-AAT?
Shuddup!
Y...
YOU...
FOR REAL?
IN THE YANAGI CASE,
I pretended to be a customer
ONE OF THE EMPLOYEES TOOK A LIKING TO ME SO IT WAS PRETTY EASY.
ARE YOU A VIRGIN?
IT'S NOT THAT BIG A DEAL
Y-YOU-
IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WOULDN'T DO FOR A SCOOP!?
NOTHING

The worst.
Scumbag!
!!
HOW I DO IT, WELL, IF THEY LOOK NICE ENOUGH I CAN PAY SERVICE.
AND ON MY END, I FINISH IT OFF WITHOUT HAVING TO SHELL OUT MONEY OUR COMPANY WINS TOO
Who are you calling-!
THAT GIRL
I KEPT COMPANY WITH SAKURAI FOR WORK
But it looks like she was getting way too excited about it without my knowledge
SINCE IT'S YOU WE'RE TALKING ABOUT, YOU PROBABLY JUST FLATTERED HER UNTHINKINGLY!
That again?
She was tricked by someone like you!
I'M SORRY FOR SAKURAI!
SHE SAID SHE WAS IN LOVE WITH YOU!
I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THAT
KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE STORE!
You owe her an apology!
AND SHE APOLOGIZED TO ME.
AND THEN BROKE UP WITH ME!

EVERY LITTLE THING LIKE THAT
IF I HAD TO WORRY ABOUT THEM, I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO DO MY JOB.
DON'T YOU THINK ABOUT THAT?
WHEN THEIR WORDS SHOW UP ON THE PAGE, WON'T THEY BE IN TROUBLE AT THEIR JOBS?
WHAT ABOUT THOSE GIRLS FROM YANAGI CONSTRUCTION?
Please just shut up
GRAB
!?
FINE!
YOU SUCK!
THAT'S WHY I'M SAYING, IS IT OKAY TO KEEP TRICKING PEOPLE?
ARE YOU THAT COLD-BLOODED?
Scary!
BUT, WE WORK FOR THE SAME PEOPLE, THE SAME MAGAZINE!
YOU MEAN TO TELL ME YOU NEVER GOT YOUR HANDS DIRTY!?


IF SANJUAN LIKES ME
DOESN'T THAT MEAN I'M BETTER THAN YOU?
Sucks to be you!
IF I'M THE WORST THEN WHAT DOES THAT MAKE YOU?
AND MORE THAN THAT
YOU'RE INTERFERING WITH MY JOB!

... HAVE THE CONFIDENCE TO WORK WITH HIM.
I NO LONGER...


Says things that just rubs salt into your wounds!
BE-CAUSE...
HE'S UNBELIEVABLY IRRITATING!
It's only been three days!
YOU TWO SURE CRASHED AND BURNED QUICKLY!
WHAT DID HE SAY?

smoke break

He's got everyone fooled!
He's a good guy.
ALL THINGS CONSIDERED.
BUT WHAT'S SO IRRITATING ABOUT HIM?

What?
...
THAT'S...
WELL, I DO KNOW THAT YOU SEE KABU AS YOUR RIVAL.

Learn from him!
ISN'T THAT GREAT? I LOVE THAT KID!
!!
He's rude and abrasive!
THAT GUY WILL DO ANYTHING TO GET A SCOOP!
He probably was a juvenile delinquent!

YOU HAVEN'T ACTUALLY TALKED WITH HIM, YEAH?
Last night after he took notes, he didn't talk for five hours.
Whoa!
He used Asaoka's no-show as an excuse!
ONCE.
YOU'RE THE SAME AGE AS KABU, RIGHT?
DON'T YOU THINK YOU'LL UNDERSTAND HIM IF YOU TRIED TALKING TO HIM ABOUT OTHER THINGS?
Damn it... That deceiver...!
He's even gone this far to trick people!
shake
BECAUSE HE DOES GOOD WORK.
WHY DOES EVERYONE SUPPORT THAT BASTARD?
IF I WENT TO A TEAM THAT I WANTED, I'D DO GOOD TOO!
Most likely.
YOU'RE DOING NOTHING BUT COMPLAIN!
YOU'RE KEEPING LORD KABU DOWNSTAIRS WAITING.
Hurry and go.
BUT EDITOR-IN-CHIEF-!
EVERYONE SHOULD DO THEIR BEST EVEN THOUGH THEY'RE NOT WHERE THEY WANT TO BE.
WELL, YOU SEE,

If I
get to
know him,

Will I
really...

See him
differently?

TBC!

happy ~~cinco~~ bara de mayo!